

## SEWING MACHINE

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

#### 5 1. Field of the invention

This invention relates to sewing machines, and more particularly to a sewing machine in which a thread end is drawn to an underside of a cloth in a stitch immediately after start of sewing.

#### 10 2. Description of the related art

There have conventionally been proposed sewing machines provided with threading means for automatically threading a sewing needle. For example, JP-8-173676-A discloses a technique for catching a thread by a hook having been passed through an eye of the needle and returning the hook through the needle eye such that the needle thread is passed through the needle eye, while the thread is guided by thread guide grooves or the like and held by thread holders. JP-51-24353-A discloses a first nipper holding a thread cut during the sewing and a second nipper catching the thread held by the first nipper. The thread caught by the second nipper is passed through the needle eye by a thread extruder. The thread having been passed through the needle eye is caught by a third nipper, which is then moved upward so that the thread is completely passed through the needle eye.

25 In the techniques disclosed in the above-noted documents, however, an end of the thread appears at the upper side of a cloth in a stitch immediately after start of sewing. Then, the operator needs to cut the thread end with scissors and draw the thread

end to an underside of the cloth. Consequently, the operator is forced into useless labor and time.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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Therefore, an object of the present invention is to provide a sewing machine in which the thread end can be drawn to the underside of the cloth in forming a stitch immediately after start of sewing.

10 The present invention provides a sewing machine comprising a head on which a needle bar for fixing a needle is mounted, a thread cutting blade provided in the head so as to be capable of cutting an end of a thread which is threaded so as to be passed through an eye of the needle, and a holder provided in the head 15 so as to be capable of holding the thread end after the thread end has been cut by the thread cutting blade. In the sewing machine, the thread cutting blade is positioned so that a first amount of thread from the eye of the needle provided in the head to the thread end held by the holder equals a second amount of thread 20 by which the thread end is drawn to an underside of a cloth in a stitch formed immediately after start of a sewing operation.

The operator cuts an end of a thread with the thread cutting blade in a threading operation and the thread end is held by the holder. In this case, a first amount of thread from the eye of 25 the needle provided in the head to the thread end held by the holder equals a second amount of thread by which the thread end is drawn to an underside of a cloth in a stitch formed immediately after start of a sewing operation. Consequently, the thread end

is drawn to the underside of the cloth when a stitch is formed immediately after start of a sewing operation.

The above-described sewing machine preferably further comprises a guide provided in the head for guiding the thread to the thread cutting blade. In this case, the thread cutting blade, the holder and the guide constitute a thread holding member.

The thread cutting blade is preferably positioned so that the first amount of thread is sufficient for the thread end to be prevented from being pulled through the needle eye in a stitch formed immediately after start of a sewing operation. In this construction, the sewing machine preferably further comprises a needle plate provided in a bed and having a needle hole. In this case, a distance between the needle eye and the thread cutting blade is longer than a distance between the needle eye and the needle hole of the needle plate.

The sewing machine preferably further comprises a threading hook and a threader threading the needle by the threading hook. In this construction, the thread set to be capable of being threaded is passed through the needle eye by the threading hook of the threader while the thread end is held by the holder.

Furthermore, the sewing machine preferably further comprises a thread drawer including a thread drawing member wiping the thread extending downward through the needle eye, the thread drawer drawing, by the thread drawing member, a looped thread having been passed through the needle eye by the threading hook, thereby disentangling the thread loop, the thread drawing member has a thread drawing stroke set so that the thread loop formed by passing the thread through the needle eye by the threading

hook is drawn by the thread drawing member such that the thread is released from a looped state.

In the above-described construction, the sewing machine preferably further comprises a thread holder holding the thread 5 drawn by the thread drawing member. In this case, an amount of thread extending from the needle eye to the thread end held by the holder is set so as to be approximately equal to an amount of thread extending from the needle eye to the thread end held by the thread holder.

10 Furthermore, the sewing machine preferably further comprises a plurality of needle bars and a plurality of the needles provided on the needle bars respectively. In this construction, the sewing machine preferably further comprises a needle bar case supporting the needle bars and a mounting base provided on the 15 needle bar case. In this construction, the holder is fixed to the mounting base and the thread end is held between the mounting base and the holder after having been cut.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

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Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become clear upon reviewing the following description of the invention with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

25 FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a multi-head sewing machine in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a front view of a needle bar case;

FIG. 3 is a partial left side view of an embroidery sewing

machine;

FIG. 4 is a partial right side view of the embroidery sewing machine;

FIG. 5 is a partial front view of the embroidery sewing machine;

FIG. 6 is a partial plan view of the embroidery sewing machine;

FIG. 7 is a right side view of the embroidery sewing machine, showing a stage of a threading operation;

FIG. 8 is also a right side view of the embroidery sewing machine, showing another stage of the threading operation;

FIG. 9 is a longitudinal section of a sewing needle and its periphery in the threaded state;

FIG. 10 is a plan view of a sewing needle and its periphery in the threaded state; and

FIG. 11 is a plan view of the sewing needle and its periphery with a thread loop being formed.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

One embodiment of the present invention will be described with reference to the drawings. In the embodiment, the invention is applied to an industrial or occupational multi-head sewing machine including three multi-needle embroidery sewing machines which can embroider three same embroidery patterns on respective caps at the same time.

The multi-head sewing machine M will first be described. Referring to FIG. 1, the multi-head sewing machine M comprises an embroidering machine body frame 1 extending in the

right-and-left direction, and a generally rectangular machine support plate 2 mounted on the rear top of the frame 1 so as to extend in the right-and-left direction. Three multi-needle embroidery sewing machines M1 to M3 are mounted on the support 5 plate 2 so as to be juxtaposed in the right-and-left direction. The embroidery sewing machines M1 to M3 have the same structure.

Each of the embroidery sewing machines M1 to M3 includes an arm 3 having a distal end on which a sewing head 4 is mounted. The head 4 has a front end on which a needle bar case 5 is mounted 10 so as to be moved in the right-and-left direction. Six needle bars 10 are supported on the needle bar case 5 so as to be vertically moved. A sewing needle 15 having a needle eye 15a is fixed to each needle bar 10. A stud 6 is continuous to the arm 3 and has a lower end to which a sewing bed body 7 is continuous. The sewing 15 bed body 7 is fixed to the machine support plate 2. The sewing bed body 7 has a front end from which a cylinder bed 8 extends forward. The cylinder bed 8 has a front end on which a thread loop taker (not shown) and the like are provided. The multi-head sewing machine M includes an operation panel 9 disposed at the 20 right end thereof. An operator operates the operation panel 9 for execution of the sewing.

Referring now to FIGS. 3 and 4, each head 4 includes the needle bar case 5, a lift driving mechanism 30 transmitting a vertically driving force from a sewing machine motor 110 to the 25 needle bar 10 and a needle bar releasing mechanism 31 cutting off transmission of driving force between the needle bar 10 and the lift driving mechanism 30. Each head 4 further includes a thread drawing mechanism 32 further including a thread drawing

member 62 and a threading mechanism 33 passing a thread through an eye 15a of a sewing needle 15 by means of a threading hook 83.

Referring to FIGS. 2 and 3, each needle bar case 5 includes 5 six vertically extending needle bars 10, six needle thread take-ups 11 located so as to correspond to the respective needle bars 10 and attached so as to be swung. Each needle bar case 5 further includes first and second needle bar guiding members 12 and 13 both fixed to the needle bar case 5 to guide the needle 10 bar 10 and a first thread holding member 14 extending in the right-and-left direction and supported on a fixing plate 17 having both ends secured to the needle bar case 5. Each needle bar case 5 still further includes six second thread holding members 16 disposed so as to correspond to the respective needles 15 and 15 six presser feet 24 disposed so as to correspond to the respective needles 15.

A connecting member 18 is secured to a middle portion of each needle bar 10. The connecting member 18 includes a connecting pin 18a to which a driving force from the lift driving mechanism 20 30 is transmitted. A compression coil spring 19 is wound on the needle bar 10 between the connecting member 18 and the first needle bar guiding member 12. The compression coil spring 19 biases the needle bar 10 upward. The needles 15 are attached to the lower ends of the respective needle bars 10. An embroidery 25 thread T is supplied from a thread spool 21 of a spool holder base 20 to each of the six needles 15.

The first thread holding member 14 holds the thread T drawn by the thread drawing mechanism 32. The first thread holding

member 14 includes a thread holding tape 14a further including hook sides of two pieces of hook-type magic tape (registered trademark). The hook sides are superposed so as to confront each other. The first thread holding member 14 further includes a 5 pair of reinforcing plates 14b holding the thread holding tape 14a therebetween.

Each second thread holding member 16 preliminarily holds a leading end of the thread T caught on the threading hook 83 before the thread T is passed through the needle eye 15a. The 10 second thread holding member 16 includes a holding portion 16a holding the thread T cut by a thread cutting blade 16a and a guiding portion 16c having a forwardly protruding distal end and guiding the thread T to the holding portion 16a. The second thread holding member 16 is fixed by a screw 102 to a mounting base 101 mounted 15 on the front of the needle bar case 5. The operator passes the thread T from the right side to the rear of the guiding portion 16c. When guided to the blade 16a, the thread T is drawn downwardly forward so that the thread T is cut by the blade 16a and held by the holding portion 16b and the front of the needle bar case 20 5 therebetween. Thus, the leading end of the thread T is held.

The thread T is drawn into the underside of a cloth by the needle 15 in a stitch formed immediately after start of the sewing operation. The thread T is caught by the thread loop taker, thereby being further drawn to the cloth underside. The thread cutting 25 blade 16a is positioned so that an amount of thread drawn to the cloth underside in the above case is equal to an amount of thread by which the end of the thread T cut by the blade 16a is drawn into the cloth backside. In other words, the thread cutting blade

16a is positioned so that a first amount of thread from the eye 15a of the needle 15 provided in the head 4 to the thread end held by the holder 16b equals a second amount of thread T by which the thread end is drawn into an underside of a cloth in a stitch 5 formed immediately after start of a sewing operation.

Furthermore, the thread cutting blade 16a is positioned so that when the needle 15 is moved downward in the forming of a stitch immediately after start of a sewing operation, the end of the thread T can be prevented from being pulled through the 10 needle eye 15a. More specifically, a distance from the needle eye 15a to the blade 16a is set so as to be longer than a distance from the needle eye 15a to a needle hole of the needle plate mounted on the cylinder bed 8.

Each needle bar case 5 is moved right and left so that a 15 desired one of the needles 15 is switched into a sewing position corresponding to a needle hole (not shown) formed in the distal end of the cylinder bed 8, whereby one of the needle bars 10 is selected. A rotating force developed by the motor 110 is transmitted via the driving shaft 22, a V belt and the like to 20 the lift driving mechanism 30 as a vertically driving force. The lift driving mechanism 30 is then driven vertically so that the needle bar 10 is vertically moved and accordingly, the corresponding needle thread take-up 11 is vertically swung. Further, stitches are formed using the thread T with a selected 25 color by the cooperation of the needle 15 of the needle bar 10 and the thread loop taker.

Referring now to FIGS. 3, 5 and 6, the lift driving mechanism 30 includes a base needle bar 35 disposed in parallel with the

needle bar 10 and a driving member 36 mounted on the base needle bar so as to be slidable and non-rotatable. The lift driving mechanism 30 further includes a transmitting member 37 mounted so as to be vertically driven together with the driving member 36 and so as to be rotatable relative to the base needle bar 35. The lift driving mechanism 30 still further includes a first coil spring 38 having one of two ends abutting the driving member 36 and the other end abutting the transmitting member 37 so that the transmitting member is biased to a transmitting position where 10 the driving force is transmitted to the needle bar 10.

The driving member 36 includes upper and lower driving members 36a and 36b both fitted with the base needle bar 35 and a connecting portion 36c connecting the upper and lower driving members. A first coil spring 38 is fitted with the upper driving member 36a. A stopper 39 is secured to a left side of the lower driving member 36b. The stopper 39 limits rotation of the transmitting member 37 to a predetermined angle. The transmitting member 37 is disposed between the upper and lower driving members 36a and 36b. The transmitting member 37 includes 15 first and second engaging members 40 and 41 engaging the connecting pin 18a and an abutment pillar 42 to which a rotating force from the needle bar releasing mechanism 31 is transmitted in order that the needle bar 10 may be released. The first engaging member 40 includes an inclined portion 40a turning the transmitting member 37 in the direction of arrow A in FIG. 6 when the connecting pin 18a in the released state abuts the first engaging member. 20 25

The needle bar releasing mechanism 31 includes a driving motor 46 mounted on the fixing member 45 and comprising a pulse

motor and a sector gear 47 in mesh engagement with an output shaft 46a of the driving motor 46. The needle bar releasing mechanism 31 further includes a guided plate 50 guided by guide pins 49a and 49b secured to the fixing member 48 so that the guided member 5 is vertically moved. The needle bar releasing mechanism 31 still further includes a first linking member 51 having a lower end connected to a central portion of the guided member 50 so that the lower end is swung and a second linking member 52 connected to an upper end of the first linking member 51 so as to be swung, 10 an abutting member 53 swung with the second linking member 52 and a stopper 54 fixed to the fixing member 48. The sector gear 47 has a front half further having a lower end abutting an abutment pin 55 secured to a lower end of the guided plate 50. The fixing members 45 and 48 are fixed to a left-side sewing machine frame 15 56.

The abutting member 53 includes a shaft 53a rotatably mounted on the fixing member 48 and fixed to the second linking member 52 by a small screw 57, a first abutting portion 53b abutting the abutment pillar 42 of the transmitting member 37 and a second 20 abutting portion 53c abutting the stopper 54. A second coil spring 59 is wound on a right end of the shaft 53a. The second coil spring 59 has one end fixed to a screw 58 in thread engagement with the fixing member 48. The abutting member 53 is biased in the direction of arrow C in FIG. 3 by the second coil spring 59 25 except when the needle bar 10 is jumped, whereupon the second abutting portion 53c is in abutment with the stopper 54.

In order that the needle bar 10 may be jumped to be released by the needle bar releasing mechanism 31, the driving motor 46

is driven so that the sector gear 47 is rotated in the direction of arrow D in FIG. 3, whereby the guided plate 50 is moved downward. The movement of the guided member 50 further moves the lower end of the first linking member 51 downward. With the downward movement of the first linking member 51, the second linking member 52 is rotated in the direction opposite arrow C about the shaft 53a together with the abutting member 53. By the rotation, the abutting member 53 presses the abutment pillar 42 of the transmitting member 37 which is further in abutment with the first abutting portion 53b, so that the transmitting member 37 is rotated in the direction of arrow A in FIG. 6 until the abutment pillar 42 abuts the stopper 39 (see the abutment pillar 42 shown by two-dot chain line in FIG. 6). As the result of rotation of the transmitting member 37, the first and second engaging members 40 and 41 are released from engagement with the connecting pin 18a. Consequently, the needle bar 10 is biased by the compression coil spring 19 thereby to be caused to jump to an upper limit position, whereby the needle bar 10 is in a released state in which a lifting force of the lift driving mechanism 30 is prevented from being transmitted to the needle bar 10.

On the other hand, in order that the needle bar 10 may be switched from the released state to a transmissible state in which the lift driving force of the lift driving mechanism 30 is transmissible to the needle bar, the transmitting member 37 is moved upward by the sewing machine motor 110 so that the connecting pin 18a abuts the inclined portion 40a from above, whereby the transmitting member 37 is rotated in the direction of arrow A in FIG. 6. Further, when moved upward so that the connecting

pin 18a is located between the first and second engaging members 40 and 41, the transmitting member 37 is rotated in the direction of arrow B in FIG. 6 by the biasing force of the coil spring 38, whereby the connecting pin 18a engages the first and second 5 engaging members 40 and 41 such that the needle bar 10 is in the transmissible state.

The thread drawing mechanism 32 wipes the thread T extending downward through the needle eye 15a when the thread has been cut by a thread cutting mechanism (not shown) provided in the cylinder 10 bed 8 at the time of completion of the sewing or needle change. The thread drawing mechanism 32 further disentangles a loop L of thread which has been passed through the needle eye 15a and caught on the threading hook 83.

Referring to FIGS. 3, 5 and 6, the thread drawing mechanism 15 32 includes the driving motor 46, the sector gear 47 formed with a detected portion 60, a thread drawing member origin detector 61 for detecting the detected portion 60, and a thread drawing member 62. The thread drawing mechanism 32 further includes a coupling plate 63 having both ends coupled to the thread drawing 20 member 62 and the sector gear 47 respectively so that the coupling plate 63 is swung. The thread drawing mechanism 32 still further includes a guiding member 64 guiding the thread drawing member 62 and a cover 65 for the guiding member 64. The thread drawing member 62 includes a standing portion 62a coupled to the coupling 25 plate 63 so as to be swung and a hook 62b for drawing the thread T. The thread drawing member 62 is held between the guiding member 64 and the cover 65 and supported in a guide groove 64a formed in the guiding member 64 so that the thread drawing member 62

is slid.

The guide groove 64a guiding the thread drawing member 62 is formed so that the thread drawing member 62 is allowed to be further moved rearward from a standby position as shown in FIGS. 5 4 and 6 when the driving motor 46 is rotated in the direction of arrow D in FIG. 3 to drive the needle bar releasing mechanism 31. The origin detector 61 comprises a photo-interrupter including a light emitting element and a light detecting element. The origin detector 61 detects, as an origin, a position of the 10 thread drawing member 62 when the lower edge of the detected portion 60 passes between the light emitting and detecting elements.

In wiping the thread, the sector gear 47 to which the driving force is transmitted from the driving motor 46 is rotated in the direction of arrow E in FIG. 3. With the rotation of the motor 15 46, the coupling plate 63 is moved downwardly forward so that the thread drawing member 62 coupled to the lower end of the coupling plate 63 passes through the first thread holding member 14 while being guided by the guide groove 64a. Thus, the thread drawing member 62 is slid to the thread wiping position where the hook 20 62b is located below the needle 15. The hook 62b is engaged with the thread T which extends downward after having been passed through the needle eye 15a (see two-dot chain line in FIG. 3). When the thread drawing member 62 is returned to the standby position in the aforesaid state, the thread T in engagement with 25 the thread drawing member 62 is held by the thread holding tape 14a of the first thread holding member 14 when passing through the first holding member.

Referring now to FIGS. 4 and 5, the threading mechanism 33

includes a threading motor 70 comprising a pulse motor, a rack 71 meshed with an output shaft 70a of the threading motor 70 and having a guide groove 71a which is engaged with guide pins 72a and 72b fixed to the right machine frame 73, and an extension 5 spring 76 having two ends. One end of the extension spring 76 is connected to a connecting pin 74 fixed to a lower end of the rack 71 and the other end of the extension spring 76 is connected to a connecting protrusion 75 fixed to a guide frame 77. As a result, the extension spring 76 urges the rack 71 upward. The 10 threading mechanism 33 further includes the guide frame 77 fixed to the right machine frame 73 and formed with a guide groove 77a, a crank plate 78 located on the right of the guide frame 77 and connected via the connecting pin 74 to a lower end of the rack 71, and a link block 80 formed into the shape of a rectangular 15 parallelepiped. A first guided pin 79 is engaged with a guide groove 77a formed in a lower end of the crank plate 78. The link block 80 is connected via the first guided pin 79 to a left side of the guide frame 77 so as to be swung. The threading mechanism 33 still further includes a pair of right and left thread catching 20 members 81 and 82 fixed to a distal end of the link block 80 and having inclined portions 81a and 82a both guiding the thread T to the threading hook 83. The threading hook 83 has a hook 83a (see FIG. 9) on which the thread T held between the thread catching members 81 and 82 is caught. A threading hook detector (not shown) 25 detects a position of the threading hook 83.

A second guided pin 84 engaged with the guide groove 77a is fixed to a middle portion of the link block 80. The guide groove 77a includes an inclined portion 77b and a horizontal

portion 77c. In the threading operation, the link block 80 is firstly guided downwardly forward and horizontally forward subsequently.

A threading operation by the thread drawing mechanism 32 5 and the threading mechanism 33 will now be described. FIG. 7 illustrates the threading hook 83 and the thread drawing member 62 both of which are in the standby state. In this state, when the operator operates a threading switch (not shown) provided on the operation panel 9, the threading motor 70 is driven to move the rack 71 downward while the rack 71 is being guided by 10 the guide pins 72a and 72b. As a result, the crank plate 78 connected to the rack 71 and the link block 80 connected to the crank plate 78 are firstly moved downwardly forward along the inclined portion 77b of the guide groove 77a and subsequently 15 horizontally forward along the horizontal portion 77c. Further, the link block 80 is moved so that the hook portion 83a of the threading hook 83 passes through the needle eye 15a as shown in FIGS. 4 and 9. The link block 80 is stopped at a thread catching position where the second guided pin 84 abuts the front end of 20 the guide groove 77a.

Referring to FIGS. 2 and 4, the operator sets the thread T guided by the thread guides 85 and 86 and the like, on the thread catching members 81 and 82 from the right side. The thread T is then cut by the blade 16a of the second thread holding member 25 16. A free end of the thread T is held between the holding portion 16b and front face of the needle bar case 5, whereby the thread T is held. In this case, when the operator upwardly draws the thread T caught on the thread catching members 81 and 82, the

thread T is guided to the threading hook 83 by the inclined portions 81a and 82a of the respective thread catching members to be caught on the hook portion 83a, as shown in FIGS. 9 and 10.

Subsequently, when the operator re-operates the threading switch 5, the threading motor 70 is driven to move the threading hook 83 rearward by a predetermined distance. The threading hook 83 is stopped at a loop disentangling position located in the rear of the needle 15. When the driving motor 46 is then rotated in the direction of arrow E in FIG. 3 and the thread drawing member 10 origin detector 61 detects the origin of the thread drawing member 62, a predetermined number of pulses is supplied to the driving motor 46 so that the thread drawing member 62 is moved to the thread drawing position along the same locus as that in the thread wiping operation, as shown in FIG. 8. Consequently, the hook portion 62b of the thread drawing member 62 is passed through the thread loop L and the free end side F of the thread loop engages the hook portion 62b.

In this case, a distance by which the thread drawing member 62 is moved from the standby position to the thread drawing position 20 is referred to as "thread drawing stroke." The end of the thread T cut by the blade 16a of the second thread holding member 16 includes a thread loop formed by a part of the thread T extending from the needle eye 15a and held by the thread holding portion 16b. The aforesaid thread drawing stroke is set so that the thread 25 T is released from a looped state. More specifically, the thread drawing stroke is set so as to be a distance corresponding to an approximately half of an amount of thread from the needle eye 15a to the thread holding portion 16b.

At this time, the thread T is loosened when the free end of the thread T is released from the holding by the second thread holding member 16. Further, the thread loop L engages the threading hook 83. Accordingly, the width of the thread loop L in the right-and-left direction is increased without the thread loop hanging down between the threading hook 83 and the needle eye 15a, as shown in FIG. 11. Further, since the hook 83a is located lower than the needle eye 15a, the thread loop L is substantially perpendicular to the thread drawing member 62, as shown in FIG. 8. Consequently, the thread drawing member 62 is passed through the loop L and engaged with the thread T.

Subsequently, when the thread drawing member 62 is returned to the standby position by the driving motor 46, the free end side F of the thread loop L held between the threading hook 83 and the needle eye 15a is drawn so that the thread loop L is pulled back through the needle eye 15a and disengaged from the threading hook 83. Consequently, the thread forming the loop L is released from the looped state. Further, the thread T is held by the thread holding tape 14a of the first thread holding member 14 when the thread drawing member 62 passes the first thread holding member 14 while drawing the free end side F of the thread T. Thus, the thread T is completely passed through the needle eye 15a. Subsequently, the threading motor 70 is driven to return the threading hook 83 to the standby position, whereby the threading operation is completed.

On the other hand, the operation panel 9 is operated so that various commands concerning the sewing or the like are supplied. The operation panel 9 includes a display 90, input means 91

including a threading switch and the like and a flexible disc drive (FDD) 93.

The following effects can be achieved from the above-described multi-head sewing machine M. The thread T is drawn into the underside of a cloth by the needle 15 in a stitch formed immediately after start of the sewing operation. The thread T is caught by the thread loop taker, thereby being further drawn into the cloth underside. The thread cutting blade 16a is positioned so that an amount of thread drawn into the cloth underside in the above case is equal to an amount of thread by which the end of the thread T cut by the blade 16a is drawn to the cloth backside. Accordingly, the end of the thread T is prevented from coming out of the surface of the cloth to be sewn. Consequently, since the operator need not cut the end of the thread T and draw the thread end to the underside of the cloth, an amount of useless labor and an amount of useless time can be reduced.

Furthermore, the thread cutting blade 16a is positioned so that when the needle 15 is moved downward in the forming of a stitch immediately after start of a sewing operation, the end of the thread T can be prevented from being pulled through the needle eye 15a. Consequently, since the thread T can be prevented from being pulled through the needle eye 15a, an amount of useless labor and an amount of useless time both due to a re-threading operation can be reduced.

Further, the end of the thread T cut by the blade 16a of the second thread holding member 16 includes a thread loop formed by a part of the thread T extending from the needle eye 15a and held by the thread holding portion 16b. The thread drawing stroke

of the thread drawing member 62 is set so that the thread forming the loop L is released from the looped state. Consequently, since the operator need not release the thread forming the loop L manually, an amount of useless labor and an amount of useless time can be 5 reduced.

Additionally, each sewing head 4 is provided with a plurality of needle bars 10 (six needle bars, in the embodiment) and the needle bars 10 are provided with the respective needles 15. Consequently, a plurality of types of embroidery threads can be 10 used in the sewing.

Several modified forms of the foregoing embodiment will now be described. In the foregoing embodiment, the present invention is applied to the embroidery sewing machines M1 to M3 each of which is provided with the needle bar case 5 in which a plurality 15 of needles 15 and needle bars 10 are mounted on the single head 4. However, the invention may be applied to a sewing machine comprising a single head provided with a single sewing needle.

The invention is applied to the industrial or occupational multi-head sewing machine M in the foregoing embodiment. However, 20 the invention may be applied to a household sewing machine for personal use.

The lift driving mechanism 30 and the driving force transmitting means are inseparable from the cloth moving mechanism in the foregoing embodiment. However, the cloth moving mechanism 25 may be separable from the lift driving mechanism 30 and the driving force transmitting means as disclosed in Japanese Patent No. 3178022.

In the foregoing embodiment, the threading hook 83 and the

thread drawing member 62 are located in the rear of the needle. 15. However, either one or both of the threading hook and thread drawing member may be disposed in front of the needle or side by side.

5 In the foregoing embodiment, the thread drawing member 62 passes through the thread loop L and then engages the thread T while the threading hook 83 and the thread T are in engagement with each other. However, the thread drawing member 62 may engage the thread loop while the threading hook and the thread are 10 disengaged from each other.

The thread T is held between the thread holding tapes 14a of the first thread holding member 14 in the foregoing embodiment. However, unless the thread is inadvertently moved or if the thread can be released from the holding by the first thread holding member 15 upon sewing, the thread may merely be placed on a member thereby to be held. Further, upon start of sewing, the thread T is drawn by the needle 15 without operation of the first thread holding member 14, so that the thread is released from the held state. However, the first thread holder may comprise an actuator so that 20 the thread is released in a positive manner, instead.

The thread drawing member 62 is reciprocally moved along a linear passage in the foregoing embodiment. However, the thread drawing member may reciprocally be moved along an arc passage or may be moved in one way along a passage. In the foregoing 25 embodiment, the distance by which the thread drawing member 62 is moved for disentanglement of the thread loop L is shorter than that thereof for thread wiping. However, the thread drawing member 62 is moved along a linear passage both for disentanglement

of the thread loop L and for thread wiping. Two linear passages may be provided both for disentanglement of the thread loop L and for thread wiping respectively.

In the foregoing embodiment, the invention is applied to 5 the multi-head sewing machine M in which the operator is located in front of the sewing machine in the sewing as viewed in FIG. 1. However, the invention may be applied to a single-head sewing machine or the like in which the operator is located on the right or left of the sewing machine. Since the position of the operator 10 changes in this sewing machine, it is desirable that the threading hook and the thread drawing member are moved along a track differing from the one in the foregoing embodiment, for example, so that the tracks of the threading hook and the thread drawing member are moved toward the operator.

15 An article to be sewn is moved by a cylindrical cap frame in the above-described multi-head sewing machine M. However, the invention may be applied to a sewing machine in which an article to be sewn is moved by a flat embroidery frame. Further, the invention may be applied to a sewing machine which is not provided 20 with any embroidery frame and an article to be sewn is moved by a feed dog, by a feed roller or manually.

The free end side F of the thread loop L is located on the left of the needle 15 in the foregoing embodiment as shown in FIG. 11. Accordingly, the hook 62b of the thread drawing member 25 62 is open to the left side. However, the free end side of the thread loop may be located on the right of the needle so that the hook of the thread drawing member is open to the right side, instead.

The thread cutting blade 16a and the holding portion 16b of the second thread holding member 16 are formed substantially at the same position in the foregoing embodiment. The thread cutting blade and the holding portion holding the cut thread may 5 be discrete from each other or located at locations differing from each other.

The thread cutting blades 16a of the second thread holding members 16 are provided on the front of each needle bar case 5 so as to correspond to a plurality of needles 15 respectively 10 in the foregoing embodiment. However, the thread cutting blades may be provided on the head so that a predetermined amount of thread is obtained, instead.

The thread cutting blades 16a of the second thread holding members 16 are provided so as to correspond to the respective 15 needles 15 in the foregoing embodiment. However, a single thread cutting blade may be provided so as to be moved in the right-and-left direction.

The pulse motor is used as the drive motor 46 in the foregoing embodiment. Another type of motor, a solenoid or an air cylinder 20 may be used as the drive motor, instead.

The position of each second thread holding member 16 may be adjustable so that the distance from each second thread holding member to the corresponding needle 15 is individually changed. Consequently, an optimum distance can be set for every needle 25 according to a type of the thread or the like.

The above-described multi-head sewing machine M includes the sewing bed 7 having a cylinder bed 8. However, the sewing bed may have a flat bed.

The foregoing description and drawings are merely illustrative of the principles of the present invention and are not to be construed in a limiting sense. Various changes and modifications will become apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. All such changes and modifications are seen to fall within the scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.